UNITED NATIONS **A**

General Assembly

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A/RES/51/167
26 February 1997

Fifty-first session
Agenda item 94 (c)

RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[on the report of the Second Committee (A/51/602)]

51/167. International trade and development

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 50/95 and 50/98 of 20 December 1995, as well as relevant international agreements concerning trade, economic growth, development and interrelated issues,

Emphasizing the importance of an open, rule-based, equitable, secure, non-discriminatory, transparent and predictable multilateral trading system,

Emphasizing also that a favourable and conducive international economic and financial environment and a positive investment climate are necessary for the economic growth of the world economy, including the creation of employment, in particular for the growth and development of the developing countries, and emphasizing further that each country is responsible for its own economic policies for sustainable development,

Noting with satisfaction the highly successful outcome of the ninth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, held at Midrand, South Africa, from 27 April to 11 May 1996, and the strengthened spirit of genuine partnership and solidarity that emerged therefrom,

Expressing its deep gratitude to the Government and the people of South Africa for the hospitality extended to the participants in the ninth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development,

Welcoming with appreciation the generous offer made by the Government and the people of Thailand to host the tenth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in the year 2000,

Expressing its appreciation to the Government and the people of Singapore for hosting the inaugural Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization,

I

1. Endorses the outcome of the ninth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, held at Midrand, South Africa, in April and May 1996, in particular the document entitled "A Partnership for Growth and Development",[1] which builds upon various related agreements and conferences, and expresses its political will and responsibility with respect to implementing the agreed commitments;

2. Takes note of the report of the Trade and Development Board on its forty-third session;[2]

3. Welcomes the fact that the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, as part of the United Nations system and a contributor to its revitalization, has adopted far-reaching reforms, as embodied in the Midrand Declaration and the document entitled "A Partnership for Growth and Development",[1] adopted by consensus at the ninth session of the Conference, which encompass its programme of work, its intergovernmental machinery and the reform of its secretariat, including its complementarity with the World Trade Organization, inter alia, by making its analysis of trade and development available to the World Trade Organization, and its cooperation with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and relevant organizations, thus adapting itself to new economic and institutional modalities created by the process of globalization, the conclusion of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations agreements[3] and the creation of the World Trade Organization;

4. Also welcomes the importance attached by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development at its ninth session to building a lasting partnership for development between non-governmental actors and the Conference and the initiative taken by the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development to hold meetings with relevant actors;

5. Recognizes the role of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development as the focal point within the United Nations for the integrated treatment of development and interrelated issues in the areas of trade, finance, technology, investment and sustainable development;

6. Also recognizes that the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, having a comparative advantage in tackling trade-related development issues, should continue to facilitate the integration of

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[1] See A/51/308.

[2] A/51/15 (vol. II); see Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-first Session, Supplement No. 15.

[3] See Legal Instruments Embodying the Results of the Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations, done at Marrakesh on 15 April 1994 (GATT secretariat publication, Sales No. GATT/1994-7).

developing countries and countries with economies in transition into the international trading system, in a complementary manner with the World Trade Organization, and to promote development through trade and investment in cooperation and coordination with the International Trade Centre, relevant institutions of the United Nations system and other international organizations;

7. Invites, in this context, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development to continue, inter alia, to follow developments in the international trading system, in particular their implications for developing countries, and to identify new opportunities arising from the implementation of the Uruguay Round agreements;

8. Decides, in this context, that the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development should implement its programme of work with a focus on the issues of globalization and development, international trade in goods and services and commodity matters, investment, enterprise development and technology, services infrastructure for development and trade efficiency;

9. Invites the President of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development at its ninth session to consider convening a special high-level review meeting two years prior to the tenth session of the Conference;

II

10. Stresses the urgent need to continue trade liberalization in developed and developing countries, including liberalization through a substantial reduction of tariff and other barriers to trade, in particular non-tariff barriers, and the elimination of discriminatory and protectionist practices in international trade relations, which will have the effect of improving access for the exports of developing countries, enhancing the competitiveness of their domestic industries and facilitating structural adjustment among developed economies;

11. Also stresses the need for the full integration of economies in transition, as well as other countries, into the world economy, in particular through improved market access for their exports in accordance with the multilateral trading agreements, and recognizes in this respect the importance of open regional economic integration of interested economies in transition among themselves, as well as with developed and developing countries, in creating new possibilities for expanding trade and investment;

12. Recognizes that the World Trade Organization provides the framework for an open, rule-based, equitable, secure, non-discriminatory, transparent and predictable multilateral trading system, and stresses that all members of the World Trade Organization should implement their commitments in respect of the Uruguay Round agreements in a full, timely, faithful and continuous manner and that all provisions of the Final Act Embodying the Results of the Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations[3] should be effectively applied, so as to maximize economic growth and the developmental benefits thereof for all, taking into account specific difficulties and interests of developing countries;

13. Urges Governments and concerned organizations to implement fully and expeditiously the Ministerial Decision on Measures in Favour of the Least Developed Countries[3] and to apply effectively the Ministerial Decision on

Measures Concerning the Possible Negative Effects of the Reform Programme on Least Developed and Net Food-importing Developing Countries,[3] as well as the recommendations adopted at the Mid-term Global Review of the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s and at the ninth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, as they relate to trade and trade-related issues of the least developed countries;

14. Emphasizes the importance of the strengthening of, and the attaining of greater universality by, the international trading system, welcomes the process directed towards accession to the World Trade Organization of developing countries and countries with economies in transition, and emphasizes the necessity for World Trade Organization member Governments and relevant international organizations to assist non-World Trade Organization members so as to facilitate their efforts with respect to accession in an expeditious manner on the basis of World Trade Organization rights and obligations and for the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development to provide technical assistance, thereby contributing to their rapid and full integration into the multilateral trading system;

15. Also emphasizes the importance of the inaugural Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization, to be held at Singapore in December 1996, in regard to reviewing the implementation of the Uruguay Round agreements and their built-in agenda, stressing that the pursuit of that agenda, as well as the international community's handling of new issues affecting the conduct of international trade relations, should be carried out in a balanced manner which takes into account the concerns of all countries, including developing countries;

16. Further emphasizes that the dispute settlement mechanism of the World Trade Organization is a key element with regard to the integrity and credibility of the multilateral trading system and the full realization of the benefits anticipated from the conclusion of the Uruguay Round;

17. Deplores any attempt to bypass or undermine multilaterally agreed procedures on the conduct of international trading by resorting to unilateral actions over and above those agreed in the Uruguay Round, and affirms that environmental and social concerns should not be used for protectionist purposes;

18. Emphasizes the need for a balanced and integrated approach to environment, trade and development issues;

19. Reaffirms that Governments should have as their objective to ensure that trade and environmental policies are mutually supportive so as to achieve sustainable development and that, in doing so, their environmental policies and measures with a potential trade impact should not be used for protectionist purposes, and reaffirms also that positive measures such as market access, capacity-building, improved access to finance and access to transfer of technology, taking into account the relationship between trade-related agreements and technology, are effective instruments in assisting developing countries to meet multilaterally agreed targets, while noting that trade measures can, in certain cases, play a role in achieving the objectives of multilateral trade agreements, while safeguarding a non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system;

III

20. Recognizes the important progress made in understanding the relationship between trade and environment in the Committee on Trade and Environment of the World Trade Organization, as well as in the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, and in the Commission on Sustainable Development, including the recommendations made at its fourth session, and requests the Conference to continue its work on trade, environment and development, in cooperation with relevant international organizations including the Commission on Sustainable Development, the United Nations Environment Programme, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, regional organizations and the World Trade Organization;

21. Requests the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development to continue its special role in promoting the integration of trade, environment and development, in accordance with paragraph 27 of resolution 50/95, by examining trade and environment issues from a development perspective, in close cooperation with the United Nations Environment Programme and the World Trade Organization and as task manager for the Commission on Sustainable Development;

22. Stresses the role of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in the context of the forthcoming special session of the General Assembly for the purpose of an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of Agenda 21;

23. Requests the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, on the basis of the outcome of its ninth session, to identify and analyse the implications for development of issues relevant to investment, taking into account the interests of developing countries and bearing in mind the work undertaken by other organizations;

24. Reaffirms the need to give priority to the problems facing the least developed countries, and reaffirms in particular that actions, as appropriate, should be taken to assist the least developed countries to maximize the potential opportunities and minimize possible difficulties arising from the Uruguay Round agreements;

25. Requests Governments, organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to take concrete measures to implement fully and as a matter of urgency the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s,[4] including the measures and recommendations agreed upon at its mid-term review, especially those related to trade and development;

26. Invites the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme to improve collaboration between the Conference's country-level programmes for least developed countries and the overall macroeconomic and sectoral policy dialogue in respect of those countries at the World Bank Consultative Group and United Nations Development Programme Round Tables, bearing in mind General Assembly resolution 50/120 of 20 December 1995;

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[4] Resolution 46/151, annex, sect. II.

27. Stresses the need to give special attention, within the context of international cooperation on trade and development issues, to the implementation of the many international development commitments geared to meeting the special development needs and problems of small island developing States and of landlocked developing States, as well as to recognize that developing countries which provide transit services need adequate support in maintaining and improving their transit infrastructure;

28. Invites preference-giving countries to continue to improve and renew their Generalized System of Preferences schemes in keeping with the post-Uruguay Round trading system and with the objective of integrating developing countries, especially least developed countries, into the international trading system, and stresses that ways and means should be found to ensure more effective utilization of Generalized System of Preferences schemes, particularly by least developed countries;

29. Notes the concern among the beneficiaries that the enlargement of the scope of the Generalized System of Preferences by linking eligibility to non-trade considerations may detract value from its original principles, namely, non-discrimination, universality, burden sharing and non-reciprocity;

30. Stresses that Governments, as well as international organizations, should extend technical assistance to developing countries to enable them to participate more effectively in the international trading system;

31. Encourages the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development to further promote South-South cooperation, including triangular cooperation, recalling the results of the Intergovernmental Meeting of Experts on South-South Cooperation, held in New York from 31 July to 4 August 1995, and the outcome of the ninth session of the Conference;

32. Notes that the forthcoming South-South conference on finance, trade and investment, to be held at San José, Costa Rica, will provide an opportunity for developing countries to advance initiatives related to the document entitled "A Partnership for Growth and Development", and invites the international community to support the initiative;

33. Requests the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, through the Secretary-General of the United Nations, to submit a proposal on savings resulting from improved overall cost-effectiveness achieved pursuant to the ninth session of the Conference, including the restructuring of the intergovernmental machinery and reform of the secretariat, and to submit a proposal on how to reallocate a part of the savings in the 1998-1999 budget cycle, with a view to strengthening the Conference's capabilities in priority areas, including, inter alia, in technical cooperation.

86th plenary meeting
16 December 1996

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RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[on the report of the Second Committee (A/51/602)]

51/168. Transit environment in the landlocked States in Central Asia and their transit developing neighbours

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 48/169 and 48/170 of 21 December 1993 and 49/102 of 19 December 1994,

Recalling also the agreed conclusions and recommendations of the first[1] and the second[2] Meeting of Governmental Experts from Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Representatives of Donor Countries and Financial and Development Institutions, held in New York from 17 to 19 May 1993 and from 19 to 22 June 1995, respectively, and in particular the conclusions and recommendations of those meetings pertaining to the newly independent and developing landlocked States in Central Asia and their transit developing neighbours,

Recognizing that the overall socio-economic development efforts of newly independent and developing landlocked States, seeking to enter world markets through the establishment of a multicountry transit system, are impeded by a lack of territorial access to the sea as well as by remoteness and isolation from world markets,

Supporting the current efforts being undertaken by the newly independent and developing landlocked States in Central Asia and their transit developing neighbours through relevant multilateral, bilateral and regional arrangements

[1] See TD/B/40(1)/2-TD/B/LDC/AC.1/4.

[2] See TD/B/42(1)/11-TD/B/LDC/AC.1/7.

to address the issues regarding the development of a viable transit infrastructure in the region,

Considering that the outcome of the Symposium for Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries, held in New York from 14 to 16 June 1995, in particular the document entitled "Global framework for transit transport cooperation between landlocked and transit developing countries and the donor community",[3] is a practical contribution to the development objectives and efforts of the United Nations,

Taking note of the progress report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development on measures designed to improve the transit transport environment in Central Asia,[4] and considering that the problems of transit transport facing the Central Asian region need to be seen against the backdrop of economic changes and the accompanying challenges, including especially the impact of those changes on the international and intraregional trade of the countries concerned,

Recognizing that, to be effective, a transit transport strategy for the newly independent and developing landlocked States in Central Asia and their transit developing neighbours should incorporate actions that address both the problems inhering in the use of existing transit routes and the early development and smooth functioning of new, alternative routes,

Emphasizing the importance of strengthening international support measures to address further the problems of the newly independent and developing landlocked States in Central Asia and their transit developing neighbours,

1. Takes note of the results of the Technical Meeting on Central Asia's Transit Transport Links with World Markets,[5] held at Ankara from 7 to 9 November 1995, under the auspices of the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development;

2. Invites the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the Governments concerned, in cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the Economic Commission for Europe and relevant regional and international organizations and in accordance with approved programme priorities and within existing financial resources, to continue elaborating a programme for improving the efficiency of the current transit environment in the newly independent and developing landlocked States in Central Asia and their transit developing neighbours;

3. Invites donor countries and multilateral financial and development institutions, within their mandates, to provide newly independent and developing landlocked States in Central Asia and their transit developing

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[3] Ibid., annex I.

[4] A/51/288, annex.

[5] See UNCTAD/LLDC/Misc.4.

neighbours with appropriate financial and technical assistance for the improvement of the transit environment for those countries;

4. Calls upon the United Nations system to continue studying, within the scope of the implementation of the present resolution, possible ways of promoting more effective cooperative arrangements between landlocked States in Central Asia and their transit neighbours and to encourage a more active supportive role on the part of the donor community;

5. Requests the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development to prepare a report on the implementation of the present resolution, to be submitted to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session.

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16 December 1996

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RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[on the report of the Second Committee (A/51/602)]

51/169. Commodities

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 45/200 of 21 December 1990, 47/185 of 22 December 1992, 48/214 of 23 December 1993 and 49/104 of 19 December 1994, and stressing the urgent need to ensure their full implementation,

Recognizing that in many developing countries, in particular African countries and least developed countries, the commodity sector remains the principal source of export revenues and of the creation of employment, income and savings, and a driving force of investments and contributor to growth and development,

Also recognizing the need for a better functioning of commodity markets and the necessity of stable and more predictable commodity prices, including searching for long-term solutions,

Mindful of the need for developing countries, especially African countries and least developed countries, to diversify their economies, in particular the commodity sector, with a view to modernizing their production, distribution and marketing systems, enhancing productivity and stabilizing and increasing their export earnings,

Concerned about the difficulties experienced by the developing countries in financing and implementing viable diversification programmes,

1. Welcomes the outcome of the ninth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, including the Midrand Declaration and the

document entitled "A Partnership for Growth and Development",[1] related to the issues of commodities;

2. Emphasizes the need for developing countries that are heavily dependent on primary commodities of continuing to promote a domestic policy and an institutional environment that encourage diversification and enhance competitiveness;

3. Notes the need expressed by developing countries, in particular the commodity-dependent developing countries, for stable and more predictable commodity prices, in the face of instability and decline in real terms of the prices of many commodities;

4. Expresses the urgent need for supportive international policies to improve the functioning of commodity markets through efficient and transparent price formation mechanisms, including commodity exchanges, and through the use of commodity price risk management instruments;

5. Urges developed countries to continue to support the commodity diversification efforts of developing countries, especially African countries, in a spirit of common purpose and efficiency, inter alia, by providing technical and financial assistance for the preparatory phase of their commodity diversification programmes;

6. Reiterates the importance of maximizing the contribution of the commodity sector to economic growth and sustainable development in commodity-dependent developing countries and, in this respect, stresses, inter alia, that:

(a) Trade-distorting policies and practices, including tariff and non-tariff barriers, tariff escalation and obstacles to competition, have a negative effect on the ability of developing countries to diversify their exports and to undertake the requisite restructuring of their commodity sector;

(b) Expansion of South-South trade in commodities offers opportunities for intersectoral linkages within and among exporting countries;

(c) In line with Agenda 21[2] and the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development,[3] Governments should have as their objective to ensure that trade and environmental policies are mutually supportive so as to achieve sustainable development; in so doing, their environmental policies and measures with a potential trade impact should not be used for protectionist purposes;

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[1] See A/51/308.

[2] Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992 (A/CONF.151/26/Rev.1 (Vol. I and Vol. I/Corr.1, Vol. II, Vol. III and Vol. III/Corr.1)) (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I: Resolutions Adopted by the Conference, resolution 1, annex II.

[3] Ibid., annex I.

(d) The issues related to commodities in the context of sustainable development should be fully taken into account by all overall review and appraisal machinery of the implementation of Agenda 21 adopted by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development;

(e) There is a need to promote research and development, to provide infrastructure and support services and to encourage investment, including joint ventures in developing countries engaged in the commodity and commodity-processing sectors;

7. Emphasizes the importance for developing countries to process a significant part of their commodities, and in that regard stresses the importance of new market opportunities for their processed and semi-processed commodities;

8. Encourages the Common Fund for Commodities, in cooperation with the International Trade Centre, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and other relevant bodies, to direct its commodity development programmes more towards commodity sector diversification projects, as well as to promote commodity market development in the developing countries, with particular focus on the needs of least developed countries, and to explore effective ways and means of using the resources of the First Account of the Common Fund;

9. Urges producers and consumers of individual commodities to intensify their efforts to reinforce mutual cooperation and assistance;

10. Requests the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and other relevant international organizations to continue to provide technical support to the basic food sector of developing countries, in particular net food importing countries, inter alia, in meeting their commitments under the Uruguay Round agreements;

11. Welcomes the technical cooperation activities that will be undertaken by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, in collaboration with the World Trade Organization and other concerned international organizations in the field of international commodity trade;

12. Requests the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, within the framework of its programme of cooperation with the World Trade Organization, to provide analytical information related to the Ministerial Decision on Measures Concerning the Possible Negative Effects of the Reform Programme on Least Developed and Net Food-importing Developing Countries,[4] and encourages it to continue to assist, in accordance with the outcome of its ninth session, in vertical and horizontal diversification in commodity-dependent countries and to promote the use of risk management in favour of producers and exporters;

13. Requests the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session on world commodity trends and prospects, with particular emphasis on

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[4] See Legal Instruments Embodying the Results of the Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations, done at Marrakesh on 15 April 1994 (GATT secretariat publication, Sales No. GATT/1994-7).

commodity-dependent developing countries in accordance with the outcome of the ninth session of the Conference;

14. Decides to include the question of commodities in the provisional agenda of its fifty-third session.

86th plenary meeting
16 December 1996